FROM THE PAGES OF JUDGE DREDD

KENNETH NIEMAND

DAVE TAYLOR

MEGATROPOLIS

BOOK ONE

'A stunning looking strip, right from the incredible opening double pager, all the way through to that teasing final page.'

— COMICON.COM

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MEGATROPOLIS

JUDGE DREDD CREATED BY JOHN WAGNER & CARLOS EZQUERRA

It began with a picture of a motorbike.

A 1930 Henderson Streamliner, to be exact; a thing of Art Deco beauty, its graceful Jazz Age curves making it look like a relic from an optimistic retro-future world that never came to be.

"It looks like a steampunk Lawmaster!" said someone on social media, proving what I've always thought; that a lot of people don't really understand what 'steampunk' means. But it did look like something some kind of alt history Dredd would ride. So I looked at that picture, and I idly wondered what kind of alternative Mega-City would produce a Lawmaster like that?

And pretty much suddenly, Megatropolis came into existence.

It would be a city of soaring Frank Lloyd Wright-designed mega-skyscrapers, its skies filled with hele-vehicles, dirigibles and rocket cars. A bright vision of the future, as imagined from the 1920s or 30s. It would be Fritz Lang's **Metropolis** (with shades of Alexander Korda's **Things to Come** thrown in) as a vision of a retro-future Mega-City One. From that, the name of the city was obvious, but who was going to inhabit it?

Alternative versions of Dredd characters. Most of them are Judges in the Dreddverse, but they couldn't all just be cops in this world. So instead some of them would became an investigative reporter, a crusading newspaper editor, an incorruptible District Attorney out to clean up the city, a slugger of a private eye, a high society clairvoyant, a genius scientist, a labour activist. Others would be corrupt cops, gangsters, corrupt politicians, a reclusive and mysterious oligarch. Inhabitants of a city divided, with that bright future vision fallen into corruption and decay.

But where was Dredd? That would be the central mystery of the story. In this alternative Mega-City One, the city itself would keep creating different versions of the lawman to fill that Dredd-shaped void at its centre.

Enjoy your first trip into Megatropolis. There will be more to come.

Kenneth Niemand

A less visually striking dystopian future world.

February 2021

ITEM! OUR **BELOVED MAYOR BOOTH** MAY HAVE HIS SHARE OF PROBLEMS--JUST ASK **DISTRICT ATTORNEY McGRUDER,** WHO MAKES NO SECRET THAT SHE'S GUNNING FOR BOTH HIM **AND** HIS JOB!--BUT THAT WON'T STOP HIM HOLDING HIS ANNUAL **PARTY ABOVE THE CLOUDS CHARITY BALL,** WITH ALL PROCEEDS GOING TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S WIDOWS AND ORPHANS FUND!

ITEM! **ONE-TON TONY TUBBS** IS GETTING HITCHED, AND HAS BEEN GIVEN SLIM-DOWN ORDERS BY HIS BRIDE-TO-BE! CAN EVERYONE'S FAVOURITE SCALE-BREAKING FUNNYMAN SHED ALL THOSE POUNDS IN THE NAME OF TRUE LOVE? NOT EVEN **MADAME CASSANDRA** CAN ANSWER THAT ONE, I BET!

ITEM! **POWER PRODUCTION** IS UP FOR THE SIXTH QUARTER IN A ROW! LET'S GIVE A BIG HAND TO THE WORKER DRONES DOWN THERE IN THE **STEAM DISTRICTS!** THEY SURE DO WORK HARD TO KEEP THE LIGHTS ON HERE IN **BIG, BEAUTIFUL MEGATROPOLIS!**

ITEM! BIG-HEARTED PHILANTHROPISTS THE **MAYBRYS** HAVE ANNOUNCED A NEW CHARITY TO HELP THE POOR AND DISADVANTAGED OF THE SHANTYTOWN DISTRICTS. 'IT'S WHAT OUR DEAR P.J. WOULD HAVE WANTED,' THEY SAID, DEDICATING IT TO THEIR RECENTLY TRAGICALLY KILLED ONLY SON PHILIP. INSPIRING STUFF!

ITEM! NO MORE ITEMS! YOU WANT ANY MORE, YOU CAN CATCH ME HERE TWICE WEEKLY, OR IN MY DAILY COLUMN **HERSHEY BARBS** IN THE PAGES OF **THE DEFENDER!** UNTIL THEN, I'M OUTTA HERE!

MTB

KRYSLER

'YOU LOOKING FOR RICO, HUH?'

OFFICER *AMY JARA.* I'M BEEN TRANSFERRED HERE FROM--

WE KNOW WHO YOU ARE AND HOW YOU GOT HERE, JARA.

BLEW AWAY A KID. MUST BE REAL PROUD OF YOURSELF.

YOUR NEW PARTNER'S WORKING THE SOUTHERN PARTS OF STEAM DISTRICT FOUR. HE'S TOO GOOD TO RESPOND TO RADIO CALLS MOST OF THE TIME, SO BEST OF LUCK FINDING HIM.

I'LL GET A SQUAD CAR TO DROP YOU OFF AT HIS LAST REPORTED POSITION. NOW GET OUTTA HERE.

THAT'S IT? NO PEP TALK OR *'WELCOME TO THE PRECINCT, ROOKIE'* SPEECH?

JUDGING BY THE STINK, SOMEONE'S ALREADY LEFT A *'WELCOME TO THE PRECINCT'* PRESENT IN YOUR LOCKER. AIN'T THAT ENOUGH?

GET USED TO IT, JARA. LOT OF ***MAYBRY MONEY*** FLOWS THROUGH THIS PRECINCT.

AIN'T NOBODY HERE GONNA FORGET WHAT HAPPENED WITH YOU AND THAT KID.

NEITHER OF THE TWO UNIFORMS TALK TO HER ON THE RIDE DOWN. ONE OF THEM SHOUTS AN OBSCENITY AT HER AS THEY TAKE OFF AGAIN. HIS PARTNER LAUGHS--

AND IN HER HEAD, FOR THE THOUSANDTH TIME, SHE HEARS THAT SHRILL LITTLE GIGGLE OF THE MAYBRY KID--

TWENTY MINUTES LATER. AND SHE'S LOST.

SO MUCH FOR HER MYSTERY PARTNER. SO MUCH FOR HER BIG PROMOTION. SO MUCH FOR NOT BEING A SHANTY-TOWN HICK AND A--

GUNFIRE--!

MAYBE FOUR BLOCKS AWAY. MULTIPLE GUNS, BUT ONE DOING MOST OF THE TALKING--

THEN SUDDEN SILENCE, FOLLOWED BY THE SOUND OF A VEHICLE--SOMETHING BIG, ANGRY AND UNFAMILIAR--ROARING AWAY.

GONE. TOO LATE TO CATCH SIGHT OF IT.

NO PARTNER. NO BACK-UP. NO IDEA OF WHAT SHE'S RUNNING INTO...

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NO IDEA AT ALL.

POLICE OFFICER! STAND UP SLOWLY AND SHOW ME YOUR HANDS!

SEE THIS? THESE FOUR GOONS ALL WORK FOR *FILLMORE FARO.* THIS OTHER ONE, THOUGH, WHO ARRIVED BY H-CAR...

I SAID--

EASY, OFFICER JARA. I'M ON YOUR SIDE. GOT HERE JUST BEFORE YOU DID.

SORRY I WASN'T AROUND TO MEET YOU EARLIER.

YOU'RE...

DETECTIVE JOE RICO.

LIKE I WAS SAYING, YOU AND I AREN'T THE ONLY BADGES HERE.

HE'S DEPARTMENT?

DETECTIVE FISHER, AKA '*THE FISH*'. TWENTY-YEAR VETERAN, AND ONE OF THE MOST NOTORIOUS *BAGMEN* IN THE DEPARTMENT.

BAGMAN? FOR WHO?

CALEB CALHOUN.

AND, SPEAK OF THE DEVIL...

NO SUDDEN MOVES, JARA. NONE OF THESE ARE FRIENDLIES.

IF YOU'VE GOT A CLICK-KIT, THEN START USING IT TO GATHER EVIDENCE. AS SOON AS THEY BOUNCE US OUT OF HERE, THEY'LL START WIPING THIS WHOLE SCENE.

HEY HEY, IT'S THE ***CHOIRBOY!*** WHAT YOU DOING HERE, CHOIRBOY? AND YOU GOT YOURSELF A GIRLFRIEND NOW?

CAN'T BE THE CHOIRBOY, QUINCE. CHOIRBOY WORKS SOLO. AND HE DON'T SEEM TO LIKE GIRLS.

QUINCY. SLOCUM. THAT'S ENOUGH. GO SECURE MY CRIME SCENE.

DETECTIVE RICO! ALWAYS SO DILIGENT. I SOMETIMES WONDER IF YOU EVER ACTUALLY SLEEP!

CAPTAIN CALHOUN. WITH RESPECT, SIR, THIS IS ***MY*** CRIME SCENE.

NOT ANYMORE. DETECTIVE FISHER WAS ***WORKING UNDERCOVER*** ON ***MY*** ORDERS.

CLEARLY SOMETHING WENT TRAGICALLY WRONG, BUT HE DIED A ***HERO,*** TAKING ALL FOUR OF HIS KILLERS WITH HIM.

POOR FISH. WE WILL MISS HIM.

NEW PARTNER, RICO?

OFFICER JARA, SIR. JUST TRANSFERRED IN.

AHH, THE FAMOUS OFFICER JARA, FROM THE MAYBRY CASE! HOW *INTERESTING*...

WE'RE LEAVING.

BUT I'VE NOT FINISHED YET--

YES, YOU HAVE...

WHEN CALEB CALHOUN STARTS STUDYING YOU THE WAY HE'S DOING NOW, IT'S TIME TO BE ELSEWHERE...

'...C'MON. LET ME BUY YOU A DRINK.'

MURPH IN?

IT'S HIS REGULAR SHUGGY-TEAM NIGHT. WHAT'LL IT BE?

BOURBON FOR THE LADY. CLUB SODA FOR ME.

YOU KNOW THIS IS A *COP BAR*, RIGHT? WHERE COPS COME TO GET DRUNK?

CLUB SODA. AND EASY ON THE FIZZ.

THAT WHY THEY CALL YOU THE CHOIRBOY?

AMONG OTHER REASONS.

SOME UNDERCOVER DUTY FISH WAS ON...

.. DRIVING A DEPARTMENT H-CAR AND WEARING HIS BADGE.

CALHOUN WILL WRITE IT UP JUST AS HE SAID, AND EVERYONE WILL GO ALONG WITH IT, JUST LIKE THEY ALWAYS DO.

BUT...?

BUT I FOUND *THIS* JUST BEFORE YOU TURNED UP

NEAR AS I CAN TELL, IT WENT STRAIGHT THROUGH ONE OF THE CARS, THEN ONE OF FARO'S MEN, AND THEN BURIED ITSELF INCHES DEEP IN A ROCKCRETE WALL.

ARMOUR-PIERCING? WHO HAS STUFF LIKE THAT?

SOMEONE REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT GETTING THE JOB DONE...

'...SOMEONE WHO KNEW ABOUT FISH'S PAY-OFF RENDEZVOUS WITH THE GARBAGE KING'S MEN, AND THEN GATECRASHED THE DEAL.

'SOMEONE NOT AFRAID TO TAKE ON ONE ROTTEN COP AND FOUR MOB TORPEDOES.'

ONE HITTER DID ALL THAT?

SHOW ME WHAT YOU GOT ON THE CLICK-KIT.

YOU SEE THERE? HEAVY RUBBER MARKS ON THE SLABWAY

WE BOTH HEARD THE SOUND OF THE GETAWAY VEHICLE. WHAT DID YOU HEAR?

AN ENGINE A BIG ONE.

LOOK AGAIN AT THOSE RUBBER BURNS. WHAT DO YOU SEE?

WIDE TREAD, BUT SINGLE SET ONLY. NOT A CAR...

'IT'S A BIKE...

'... A REALLY BIG BIKE.'

--THE GALA OPENING OF NEW NIGHTSPOT **THE LUXOR**, AND EVERYONE WHO'S ANYONE IN MEGATROPOLIS SOCIETY IS HERE TONIGHT!

THERE'S EVEN A RUMOUR THAT CONRAD CONN MIGHT BE COMING! BUT, IN THE MEANTIME, HERE'S SOMEONE ALMOST AS WELL KNOWN--**MAYOR BOB BOOTH!**

KOFF

HEY, BOB--WHO'S THE DAME?

ANY UPDATE ON POLICE CHIEF GOODMAN'S ILLNESS, MISTER MAYOR?

TIME TO GET TOUGH ON THE STEAM-DISTRICT STRIKERS, YOUR HONOUR?

EASY, BOYS. ONE QUESTION AT A TIME, *HUH?*

BERNICE HERSHEY, *FROM THE DEFENDER.*

ANY COMMENT ON THE RUMOURS ***EUSTACE FARGO*** IS GOING TO BE BANKROLLING HILDA McGRUDER'S RUN AGAINST YOU NEXT YEAR?

NO POLITICAL QUESTIONS. THE MAYOR'S JUST HERE TO ENJOY HIMSELF---

IT'S OKAY, HOWARD. I'LL TAKE MISS HERSHEY'S QUESTION..

EUSTACE FARGO IS A ***GREAT MAN,*** AND I'VE ALWAYS REGRETTED HIS DECISION TO STEP BACK FROM PUBLIC LIFE IN THE CITY HE *CO-FOUNDED.*

IF THESE RUMOURS ARE TRUE, THEN I WELCOME HIS RETURN, JUST AS I WELCOME ANY CHALLENGE FROM DISTRICT ATTORNEY McGRUDER, SHOULD SHE CHOOSE TO RUN.

MY COLLEAGUE MISTER SINFIELD IS RIGHT, THOUGH--I AM HERE TO ENJOY MYSELF, AND SUPPORT A FRIEND'S NEW BUSINESS VENTURE.

BY 'FRIEND', YOU MEAN *FILMORE FARO?*

ANY IDEA WHY THEY CALL HIM *'THE GARBAGE KING'*, MISTER MAYOR, AND WHETHER IT'S ANYTHING TO DO WITH ALLEGATIONS THAT HE MADE HIS MONEY AS MEGATROPOLIS'S MOST PROLIFIC *BLACKMAILER?*

MISTER MAYOR...?

GOOD GOING, HERSH. YOU REALLY KNOW HOW TO RUIN A PARTY.

THAT BITCH FROM *THE DEFENDER*...

SHE WORKS FOR ***VOLT***. MAYBE WE SEND GRICE TO TALK TO HIM?

TEMPTING, BUT ***HOLIER-THAN-THOU HADRIAN*** IS ONE OF McGRUDER'S CRUSADERS. WE GO AFTER HIM, WE GET ***HER*** ON OUR BACKS.

STILL, MAYBE SOME KINDA ***MESSAGE*** NEEDS TO BE SENT...

FARO. HE WANTS A WORD.

NOW I GOTTA DEAL WITH ***THAT*** WHACKJOB? THIS NIGHT ISN'T GETTING ANY BETTER.

FILMORE! WHAT A PLACE! WHAT A PARTY! SO GLAD I COULD MAKE IT!

BOB, LISTEN, I GOTTA PROBLEM...

NOT IN PUBLIC, IDIOT. THERE MUST BE SOMEPLACE IN THIS MONSTROSITY YOU'VE BUILT WHERE WE CAN TALK IN PRIVATE.

ENJOY, EVERYONE!

FILMORE WANTS TO SHOW ME HIS OWN PRIVATE TUTANKHAMEN'S TOMB!

THIS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED THE OTHER NIGHT? THE HIT ON YOUR PEOPLE IN THE STEAM DISTRICT?

YOU KNOW WHO IT WAS? ANGELS? NARCOS?

I GOT A DEAL WITH THE ANGELS. I GOT THE CITY, AND THEY GOT THE SHANTY-TOWNS ..

..AND NARCOS WOULDN'T DARE MAKE A MOVE ON ME, NOT WITH WHAT I GOT ON HIM.

WE GOT A ***NEW PLAYER*** IN THE GAME, BOB, AND I'M ALREADY THREE GUYS DOWN.

CALHOUN LOST ONE OF HIS PEOPLE TOO. I'LL GIVE HIM WHATEVER HE NEEDS TO TAKE CARE OF THIS FAST.

SOMETHING I NEED FROM YOU IN RETURN, THOUGH...

YOU GETTING ALL THIS, BATMAN?

LOUD AND CLEAR.

THE BOSS IS GOING TO WANT TO HEAR THIS.

RICO--AM IN PURSUIT OF FOUR SUSPECTS. HEADING...*UH*, PAST SOME GIANT MACHINERY TOWARD SOME OTHER REALLY NOISY GIANT MACHINERY STUFF.

MISSING CHASING ANGEL GANGERS AROUND THE SHANTY TOWNS YET, JARA?

KLANKK

IF THIS IS ANOTHER '*WELCOME TO THE BIG CITY*' SPEECH, THEN YOU CAN--

HIS BREATHING'S HEAVY INSIDE THE HEAT-PROOF SUIT

FOR A MOMENT, SHE FLASHES BACK TO THE MAYBRY KID'S GIGGLE--

PHILIP MAYBRY GOT TWO IN THE CHEST, JUST AS HE PULLED THE KNIFE ACROSS HIS FINAL VICTIM'S THROAT

THIS ONE IS LUCKIER.

RICO--I GOT CUFFS ON ONE THREE MORE PROBABLY HEADING YOUR WAY YOU READ ME?

RICO?

YEAH, I GUESS YOU HEARD ME.

HELP YOU WITH SOMETHING, OFFICERS?

WE'RE LOOKING FOR WITNESSES TO A ***MULTIPLE MURDER*** THAT HAPPENED IN THIS AREA THE OTHER NIGHT.

THESE MEN RAN FROM US AS SOON AS WE TRIED APPROACHING THEM FOR STATEMENTS.

OH, WE KNOW ABOUT THEM MURDERS AND THE WAY YOU COPS *'TAKE STATEMENTS'*...

YOUR CAPTAIN CALHOUN AND HIS PEOPLE ALREADY BEEN THROUGH HERE, AND I GOT FRIENDS GONNA BE OUTTA WORK FOR ***WEEKS*** WHILE THEY HEAL UP FROM ANSWERING THEIR QUESTIONS.

AND WE BOTH KNOW THOSE MEN YOU GOT AIN'T ANY MURDERERS. .

THEY'RE ***ILLEGALS,*** WORKING HERE WITHOUT PERMITS TO FEED THEIR FAMILIES BACK IN THE SHANTIES.

THAT'S WHY THEY RAN, NOT 'COS THEY KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT GANGSTERS AND GANGSTER COPS GETTING SHOT UP

I DON'T CARE ABOUT THEIR ILLEGAL WORK STATUS, BUT AS SOON AS THEY ATTACKED OFFICER JARA AND I THEN WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM.

OFFICER .. *JARA?*

LET 'EM PASS. IT AIN'T LIKE WE GOT ENOUGH TROUBLE FROM COPS RIGHT NOW.

YOU KNOW HIM?

NEVER SEEN HIM BEFORE IN MY LIFE. YOU?

ONLY BY REPUTATION...

JOHN CLAY. UNION ORGANISER OR DANGEROUS POLITICAL AGITATOR, DEPENDING ON WHO YOU LISTEN TO.

AMERICA JARA'S LITTLE GIRL. ALL GROWN UP INTO A COP

DAMN

HERSHEY STILL HERE?

SORRY, HADE SHE WENT HOME FOR THE NIGHT. SAID SHE'D GET STARTED ON THAT MAYBRY FAMILY COVER-UP PIECE TOMORROW.

HADE..?

TOO LATE. NO, SHE'S GONE. YOU'VE GOT PEOPLE YOU CAN SEND, RIGHT?

'WHOEVER YOU'VE GOT, JUST GET THEM THERE BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!'

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BERNICE HERSHEY.

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BERNICE HERSHEY?

MISS HERSHEY? I'M DETECTIVE R.CO.

IT'S OKAY YOU'RE SAFE NOW...

...I JUST NEED YOU TO TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED HERE.

BERNICE HERSHEY...

GET DOWN.

PLEASE. *ANYTHING* YOU CAN TELL US AT ALL, MISS?

ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THESE TWO MEN...

...OR THE TWO OUT IN THE HALLWAY?

GET BEHIND ME.

PLEASE .. PLEASE DON'T KILL ME...
TWO OFFICERS ARE ON THEIR WAY. THEY WILL HELP YOU.
TRUST NO ONE ELSE FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT
...AND YOU DON'T KNOW *WHO* HE WAS OR *WHY* HE WAS HERE TO PREVENT THESE FOUR MEN KILLING YOU?
TWO INSIDE THE APARTMENT, PROBABLY LOOKING TO MAKE IT SEEM LIKE A BURGLARY GONE WRONG.

AND TWO MORE OUTSIDE AS BACK-UP.

WAIT, YOU HEAR THAT?

DEPARTMENT H-CARS, COMING IN TO LAND ON THE ROOF. IT'S *CALHOUN.*

SHE'S A MATERIAL WITNESS IN HIS CASE. WHAT DO WE DO?

'TWO OFFICERS ARE ON THEIR WAY. THEY WILL HELP YOU. TRUST NO ONE ELSE FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.'

THE MAN WHO SAID THAT KILLED FOUR MEN TO KEEP ME ALIVE AND MAKE SURE IT WAS *YOU* WHO GOT TO ME FIRST.

SO, PLEASE, GET ME OUT OF HERE, AND I'LL TELL YOU *EVERYTHING* I KNOW.

WHAT ARE THE CHANCES *HE* MADE THE CALL TO US, PRETENDING TO BE DISPATCH?

SO HE KNOWS US, AND HE'S INSIDE DEPARTMENT COMMS?

¡JODER! WHO *IS* THIS GUY?

MAYBE THEY DIDN'T SEE US...

LIKE WE SHOULD BE THAT LUCKY.

TWO OF THEM, COMING AFTER US. HOLD ON...

RECOGNISED ONE OF THE BODIES IN THE HALLWAY--MUSCLE FOR *FILMORE FARO*.

MISS HERSHEY, CAN YOU THINK OF A REASON WHY ONE OF MEGATROPOLIS'S PREMIER MOBSTERS WOULD WANT YOU DEAD?

YOU MEAN OTHER THAN THE DOZEN OR SO STORIES I'VE WRITTEN CALLING HIM OUT AS A SLEAZE-PEDDLING SCUMBAG?

HIS LAWYERS SEND LEGAL THREATS, AND HADE BINS 'EM...

.. FROM THAT TO SENDING FOUR THUGS TO MURDER ME IS SOME KINDA ESCALATION.

ONE OF THEM STILL ON US

PROBABLY *QUINCY.* HE WAS A COMBAT H-PILOT IN THE WAR.

BAD TIME TO FIND OUT THERE'S ACTUALLY SOMETHING HE'S GOOD AT.

BUT WHAT IF FARO WAS WORKING FOR SOMEONE ELSE? QUESTION IS, *WHO?*

TROUBLE WITH THIS CASE--TOO MANY PLAYERS COMING INTO THE GAME.

SPEAKING OF WHICH...

THUNNNCH

THAT ROCKET RIDE'S SIGNALLING US TO FOLLOW IT...

WAIT, YOU'RE NOT ACTUALLY GOING TO *DO* IT, ARE YOU?

CAN'T OUTRUN IT, AND YOU SAW WHAT IT D.D TO QUINCY. IF THEY WANTED US DEAD, WE'D BE SLAB-WRECKAGE ALREADY...

'. .LET'S GO FIND OUT WHO OR WHAT WE'RE DEALING WITH HERE.'

I KNOW YOU *GUTHRIE,* RIGHT? YOU USED TO BE WITH THE DEPARTMENT.

RIGHT. AND THIS HERE'S RATMAN--

ROFFMAN.

LIKE I SAID. *RATMAN.* PUT AWAY THE PIECES, CHIEF WE'RE ON YOUR SIDE.

INVESTIGATORS FOR THE *DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE.*

THERE WERE STORIES ABOUT YOU. USE OF UNNECESSARY FORCE UNORTHODOX UNDERCOVER METHODS...

BAD THINGS ALL DONE FOR THE RIGHT REASONS, CHO:RBOY. BUT YOU STILL THINK I'M NOT ON THE LEVEL?

THEN MAYBE YOU'LL BELIEVE THE *BOSS.*

THEY BOTH WORK FOR ME, DETECTIVE MY THANKS TO YOU AND OFFICER JARA FOR KEEPING MY *WITNESS* OUT OF THE HANDS OF CAPTAIN CALHOUN.

I'M YOUR WITNESS? TO WHAT?

YOUR NAME CAME UP IN A SURVEILLANCE OPERATION, LEADING US TO BELIEVE YOUR LIFE WAS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER.

I'M SORRY, MISS HERSHEY, BUT I THINK IT'S BEST IF WE TOOK YOU INTO *PROTECTIVE CUSTODY.*

IT WON'T BE FOR LONG, I PROMISE. AND HADRIAN VOLT IS A CLOSE FRIEND OF MINE. HE'LL BE DELIGHTED TO KNOW YOU'RE SAFE.

SHE SAW AND SPOKE TO AN *UNIDENTIFIED ASSAILANT* POSSIBLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MURDERS OF NINE MEN, INCLUDING A POLICE OFFICER.

AND WE'D LIKE TO KNOW HOW THE SUSPECT ALSO KNEW IN ADVANCE ABOUT THE ATTEMPT ON MISS HERSHEY'S LIFE

SHE'S *OUR* WITNESS TOO, MADAM DISTRICT ATTORNEY.

I NEEDED SOMEONE *TRUSTWORTHY* TO GET MISS HERSHEY OUT OF THERE, WITHOUT TIPPING OFF CALHOUN ABOUT MY INVOLVEMENT.

I HAD ROFFMAN MAKE SURE *YOU* WERE THE FIRST RESPONDERS. I DON'T KNOW HOW THE SUSPECT WAS ABLE TO GET THERE FIRST TO SAVE MY WITNESS, BUT I'M GLAD HE DID.

BUT MY OFFICE DOESN'T COLLUDE WITH ***MURDEROUS VIGILANTES,*** DETECTIVE, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE IMPLYING.

STAY ON THE VIGILANTE CASE. WE CAN'T LET CALHOUN GET TO HIM FIRST AND BURY WHATEVER THE TRUTH ABOUT HIM IS.

GUTHRIE WILL PASS ON ANY INFORMATION WE HAVE. BUT PLEASE BE CAREFUL...

THE FORCES THESE KILLINGS COULD BE SETTING LOOSE...

...THEY MIGHT DESTROY ***ANY ONE OF US*** CAUGHT IN THE FIRING LINE.

THEY SAY SHE'S GOT A SOLID SHOT AT THE MAYOR'S JOB NEXT ELECTION.

HELL, SHE'S GOT MY VOTE.

YOU OKAY TO TAKE THE CAR BACK TO THE PRECINCT? I'LL CATCH A ZOOM FROM HERE.

PERSONAL TIME, *HUH?* ANYONE ELSE, THAT MEANS THEY'RE LOOKING TO TIE ONE ON. YOU, THOUGH...

'...CLUB SODA, EASY ON THE FIZZ, RIGHT?'

MURPH? POKER BUDDIES NIGHT. HE'LL BE REAL SORRY HE MISSED A BIG SPENDER LIKE YOU COMING IN.

HE SPENDS THE REST OF THE NIGHT AT **THE TIGHT BOOTS.** LONG ENOUGH FOR EVERYONE TO SEE HIM.

LONG ENOUGH FOR SOMEONE TO SURELY DROP A DIME AND LET **THEM** KNOW WHERE HE IS.

CLOSING TIME. HE WALKS HOME, DELIBERATELY KEEPING TO THE EMPTY SIDE STREETS.

DELIBERATELY MAKING HIMSELF A TARGET. KEEPING THEIR ATTENTION ON HIM, AND AWAY FROM **HER**--

CHOMBOY.

IT DOESN'T TAKE THEM LONG TO COME FOR HIM.

YOU BEEN A ***NAUGHTY BOY,*** AIN'T YOU? TIME FOR YOUR PUNISHMENT...

--ONLY ONE STORY HAPPENING IN MEGATROPOLIS THESE DAYS, AND THAT'S THE SO-CALLED **VIGILANTE SLAYINGS!**

WITH THREE MORE ATTACKS IN THE LAST FOUR DAYS, HIS TALLY NOW STANDS AT **SEVENTEEN** GUNNED DOWN IN COLD BLOOD, ALL THE VICTIMS ALLEGED MEMBERS OF THE CITY'S MOST NOTORIOUS MOB GANGS.

AND NOW TODAY, A SENSATIONAL NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE CASE, WHEN IT'S REVEALED THAT **MADAME CASSANDRA,** FAMED PSYCHIC TO MEGATROPOLIS'S WEALTHIEST CITIZENS, HAS COME FORWARD TO HELP TRY TO IDENTIFY THE KILLER!

CAPTAIN CALEB CALHOUN, IN CHARGE OF THE INVESTIGATION, HAD THIS TO SAY--

NATURALLY WE WELCOME HELP FROM **ANY** PUBLIC-SPIRITED CITIZEN, BUT, TRUST ME, IT'LL BE DEDICATED POLICE WORK THAT CATCHES THIS KILLER, NOT MAGIC VISIONS AND TALKING TO THE SPIRITS.

DESPITE THE CAPTAIN'S SCEPTICISM, THE MAYOR'S OFFICE PERSONALLY INTERVENED TO GIVE MADAME CASSANDRA ACCESS TO THE LATEST CRIME SCENE..

MADAME C! DID YOU SEE A VISION OF THE KILLER? DO YOU KNOW WHO HE IS?

NO. POWERFUL FORCES HIDE HIS IDENTITY FROM ME, BUT I SAW INTO THE **VICTIM'S MIND**, AND FELT WHAT HE FELT IN HIS **LAST MOMENTS**...

DREAD. HE FELT ONLY **DREAD**, WHEN HE SAW WHAT HAD COME TO **JUDGE** HIM.

'JUDGE DREAD'?

THAT'S WHAT THE PAPERS RAN WITH. FOR ABOUT HALF A DAY..

...UNTIL THE JUVIE SCRAWL GANGS IMPROVED ON IT.

THEY'VE BEEN PLAYING THAT LINE NON-STOP SINCE SHE SAID IT.

AND HEY PRESTO, HIGH SOCIETY'S FAVOURITE SORCERESS CON ARTIST ACCIDENTALLY STICKS A ***CATCHY MONIKER*** ON OUR KILLER.

BLOOD MARKS ARE A LOT FRESHER THAN THE PAINT. THE WRITING WAS ALREADY HERE.

VICTIM?

LOCAL SMALL-TIME PUNK. NO MOB CONNECTIONS IN HIS JACKET

SHOTS THAT KILLED HIM CAME FROM A SATURDAY-NIGHT SPECIAL. NOT EXACTLY THE HIGH-TECH HAND CANNON OUR PERP USES.

THIS KILLER'S EITHER A LOW-RENT COPYCAT OR A LOCAL RIVAL LOOKING TO PIN THE BLAME ON THE BIG NEWS-STORY OF THE WEEK.

EITHER WAY, THIS ISN'T OUR CASE.

GOT NEWS FOR YOU. WHILE YOU WERE OFF, WE BECAME THE OFFICIAL DUMPING GROUND FOR EVERY DEADBEAT CASE AND DUTY DETAIL IN THE CITY.

HEY, BE GRATEFUL--

IF IT WASN'T FOR THAT BUSTED FLIPPER OF YOURS, WE'D PROBABLY BE PULLING BODYGUARD DUTY RIGHT NOW FOR THAT MONKEY ONE OF THE RADIO STATIONS WANTS TO RUN FOR MAYOR.

OH, WELCOME BACK, BY THE WAY.

I'M DRIVING.

WANT TO TELL ME YET WHAT HAPPENED?

NOPE

THEY CAME AT HIM IN A RUSH, BUT NOT FAST ENOUGH THAT HE COULDN'T HAVE GONE FOR HIS SIDEARM IF HE WANTED TO--

GUNNING DOWN COPS, EVEN ONES AS ROTTEN AS THESE--

CITY WOULD HAVE TO FALL A LOT FURTHER BEFORE THAT HAPPENED.

EVEN WITH THE MASKS, HE CAN GUESS WHO MOST OF THEM ARE--

QUINCY, MOVEMENTS STIFF, HURTING FROM HIS H-CAR CRASH EARLIER THAT DAY.

SLOCUM, AND THE TELL-TALE SAUERKRAUT HOTTIE STAINS ON HIS LAPELS.

JACK, MORE HESITANT THAN THE OTHERS. COULD HAVE BEEN A GOOD COP, BUT TOO WEAK AND MALLEABLE.

HE ROLLS WITH THE HITS, MAKING THEM THINK THEY'RE DOING MORE DAMAGE THAN THEY ARE.

STILL, PRIDE WON'T LET HIM TAKE THE BEATING FOR FREE--

SOMETHING TO WIPE THAT DUMB SMILE OFF SLOCUM'S FACE.

SATISFYING, BUT *STUPID.*

FOR THAT, THEY BEAT HIM FOR A FEW MINUTES EXTRA.

TAKE THE WARNING, CHOIRBOY. YOU AND YOUR KID-KILLER PARTNER.

*YOUR LOYALTY'S TO THE **DEPARTMENT**, NOT THAT DYKE-BITCH D.A.*

STILL, BETTER THIS WAY THAT HE TAKES THE CONSEQUENCES RATHER THAN HER.

YOU THINK I'M SOME DUMB ROOKIE? YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW WHO BEAT MY PARTNER TO A PULP, AND WHY?

YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WITH THINGS THEY DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT, PARTNER.

YOU MEAN THE *MAYBRY CASE?* YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY I SHOT DEAD A--

INCOMING RADIO CALL...

RICO, IT'S GUTHRIE. SOMETHING GOING DOWN RIGHT NOW AT FARO'S ***NIGHTCLUB HQ.*** ALL THE GUNFIRE WE'RE HEARING ON OUR SURVEILLANCE WIRE SAYS VIGILANTE CASE.

IF YOU'RE IN THE AIR, YOU COULD STILL BE FIRST ON THE SCENE.

WHERE?

SOUTH-EAST CENTRAL HUB. THE LUXOR NIGHTCLUB...

'STEP ON IT!'

...HE'S ***HERE,*** RIGHT NOW! I GOT ALL MY GUYS BETWEEN ME AND HIM, BUT IT STILL AIN'T GONNA BE ENOUGH!

GET ALL YOUR PEOPLE HERE NOW! I PAID YOU ***PLENTY*** OVER THE YEARS--WHERE'S THE ***PROTECTION*** THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE BUYING ME?

FILMORE FARO.

W-WAIT.. LISTEN TO ME!

THAT MASK YOU'RE WEARING, THAT TELLS ME YOU'RE ***HIDING*** STUFF YOU HAVE A LIFE, PEOPLE YOU CARE ABOUT.

ANYTHING HAPPENS TO ME, AND I GOT PEOPLE WHO'LL COME AFTER YOU. THEY'LL FIND OUT WHO YOU ARE EVERYTHING YOU'RE TRYING TO PROTECT, THEY'LL ***BURN*** IT ALL, I GUARANTEE IT.

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THAT WAY, THOUGH. I CAN GO AWAY RIGHT NOW, AND YOU AND MEGATROPOLIS WILL NEVER SEE ME AGAIN

THAT AIN'T ENOUGH? ANYTHING YOU WANT, I CAN GET IT FOR YOU. MONEY, ***DIRT*** ON EVERYONE WHO'S ANYONE IN THIS CITY... IT'S ALL YOURS, IF YOU WANT IT!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? DON'T YOU KNOW WHAT I CAN DO FOR YOU? DON'T YOU KNOW ***WHO*** I AM IN THIS CITY?

I KNOW WHO AND WHAT YOU ARE

GARBAGE.

THIS IS MY CRIME SCENE! SECURE THE AREA--NO ONE ELSE IS GOING IN THERE EXCEPT OFFICER JARA AND MYSELF!

ORDERS FROM CAPTAIN CALHOUN. HE SAYS--

HOLEEEE

GAS ROUNDS.

=KOFF=

=KOFF=

=KOFF=

=KOFF=

=KOFF=

RICO--!

GET GET BACK I... BE OKAY

D-DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!

MEGATROPOLIS P.D.! STOP!

I SAID STOP!

OFFICER AMY JARA

PHILIP MAYBRY WAS A DANGEROUS AND UNCONTROLLABLE KILLER WHO WAS ABOUT TO TAKE ANOTHER INNOCENT LIFE

YOU DID NOTHING WRONG SHOOTING HIM WAS THE RIGHT DECISION.

YOU JUDGED CORRECTLY THEN WHAT WILL BE YOUR DECISION HERE?

¡CARAJO!

'THE MAYBRY CASE. TWENTY-FOUR DEAD OR MISSING GIRLS. I WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO SEEMED TO NOTICE OR CARE THEY WERE ALL CONNECTED TO SHANTYTOWN CHARITY PROGRAMMES FUNDED BY THE **MAYBRY FAMILY**...

'THEIR **PSYCHOPATH SON PHILIP**, USING THE CHARITY FILES AS HIS OWN PERSONAL HUNTING CATALOGUE.

'WHEN I FOUND HIM, HE WAS ALREADY STARTING TO CUT UP VICTIM TWENTY-FIVE...'

.. AND ***THAT'S*** WHY I SHOT AND KILLED A SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD KID.

MAYBRY MONEY KEPT MOST OF IT OUT THE PAPERS. I GOT PROMOTED AND TRANSFERRED OUT OF THE SHANTIES TO SHUT ME UP.

AND THE VIGILANTE KNEW ABOUT ALL THIS, AND THAT'S HOW I LET HIM ESCAPE DOWN HERE.

I'M SORRY. I HAD HIM COLD. THEN I JUST LET HIM WALK AWAY.

BECAUSE OF WHAT HE SAID. WHAT HE KNEW ABOUT ME.

MORE BIKE TRACKS HERE. SEE?

NOT YOUR FAULT, JARA. YOU SHOULD HAVE HAD YOUR PARTNER THERE TO BACK YOU UP.

NOT *THIS* PARTNER, THOUGH HE WAS TOO BUSY TRYING NOT TO BARF ALL OVER HIS WINGTIPS FROM THAT GAS STUFF.

LIKE I SAID, NOT YOUR FAULT.

MULTIPLE TRACKS, SOME OF THEM OLD. AT LEAST NOW WE KNOW HOW HE AND THAT BIKE OF HIS ARE GETTING AROUND THE CITY UNSEEN.

THESE TUNNELS GO ON FOREVER. HOW COULD ALL THIS BE DOWN HERE AND NO ONE KNOWS ABOUT IT?

BEATS ME.

CAN MAYBE THINK OF ONE PERSON WHO MIGHT KNOW...

COME ON LET'S GO FIND HIM.

BAR

ON THE HOUSE ANYONE WHO PUTS UP WITH THIS ONE AND HIS SERMONS DESERVES IT.

YOU'RE MURPH?

YEP KNOWN THIS ONE SINCE HE WAS A ROOKIE SO BLAME ME FOR ALL HIS MANY FAILINGS.

EXCEPT FOR THE SHAMEFUL SIN OF ***ABSTINENCE.*** THAT ONE HE NEVER LEARNED FROM ME.

SECRET TUNNELS BENEATH THE CITY, IS IT? WELL, THERE'S ALWAYS BEEN STORIES ABOUT SUCH THINGS...

...STEAM TUNNELS, BUILT TO PROVIDE FREE HEATING FOR THE ENTIRE CITY.

ANOTHER GRAND DESIGN THAT NEVER HAPPENED AFTER OUR TWO FOUNDING FATHERS FELL OUT..

'...MUCH LIKE THE PROMISE THAT ONE DAY WE'D HAVE MACHINES TO CONTROL THE WEATHER.'

THERE MUST BE ***PLANS*** OF THESE TUNNELS SOMEWHERE. SOMEONE MUST KNOW WHERE THEY ALL GO.

OH, HE'S A WILY ONE IS YOUR PARTNER. HE ALREADY KNOWS WHO MIGHT HAVE SUCH A THING, AND WHO MIGHT BE THE MEANS OF GETTING TO SEE THEM.

EUSTACE FARGO. YOU WERE ON HIS BODYGUARD DETAIL. YOU SAVED HIS LIFE IN THE ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON HIM.

YOU CAN GET ME A FACE-TO-FACE WITH THE MAN WHO DESIGNED MEGATROPOLIS AND EVERYTHING IN IT.

NOT ASKING FOR MUCH, IS HE? ONLY AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR FAIR CITY'S MOST NOTORIOUS RECLUSE.

IT'LL TAKE SOME DOING, JOE, AND I CAN'T MAKE ANY PROMISES IT'LL--

THE TELE-SCREEN! TURN THE SOUND UP!

...IN LIGHT OF THE MASSACRE TWO DAYS AGO AT THE LUXOR, THE ESCALATING LABOUR UNREST IN THE STEAM DISTRICTS AND THE CONTINUING ABSENCE THROUGH ILLNESS OF POLICE COMMISSIONER GOODMAN--

Live from City Hall

--AND OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS ARE WITH HIM AND HIS FAMILY AT THIS TIME--

--I HAVE, AFTER CONSIDERATION, DECIDED TO INVOKE THE **EXECUTIVE ACTION POWERS** OF MY OFFICE TO DEAL WITH THE LAW AND ORDER CRISIS NOW THREATENING OUR GREAT CITY--

--STARTING WITH INVITING **CAPTAIN CALEB CALHOUN** TO OVERSEE THE CREATION OF A **NEW UNIT** WITHIN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT. .

...A **SPECIAL JUDICIAL SQUAD,** EMPOWERED TO CRACK DOWN WITHOUT MERCY OR FAVOUR ON THIS RISING TIDE OF LAWLESSNESS!

THANK YOU, MAYOR BOOTH. IT IS INDEED AN HONOUR TO BE CALLED TO THE SERVICE OF OUR CITY, EVEN UNDER SUCH DIRE CIRCUMSTANCES...

TO THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY, I PROMISE A **SWIFT END** TO THIS NEW AND VIOLENT CRIMEWAVE.

'TO THE CRIMINALS, TROUBLEMAKERS AND RABBLE-ROUSERS, I PROMISE THE SAME--

'WE WILL MEET VIOLENCE WITH VIOLENCE. WE WILL NOT SHIRK FROM THE TASK, IN ORDER TO MAKE A SAFER AND BETTER CITY.

'AND TO THE SO-CALLED "JUDGE DREDD" VIGILANTE, I PROMISE THIS--

'WE WILL FIND YOU, AND PUT A STOP TO YOUR MURDEROUS CRUSADE. YOU'RE NOT THE LAW IN THIS CITY **WE** ARE.'

THANK YOU, MEGATROPOLIS. THAT IS ALL.

CALHOUN WITH HIS OWN PRIVATE POLICE FORCE. GOD HELP US ALL.

I'LL GET YOU WHAT YOU'RE ASKING FOR, JOE. LEAVE IT TO MURPH.

THAT'S ALL OF THEM? I COUNT ONE MISSING.

CLAY, THE UNION TROUBLEMAKER.

STEAM DISTRICT SNATCH-SQUADS WENT LOOKING FOR HIM, BUT HE MUSTA GONE TO GROUND.

THEN TELL THEM THE NEXT TIME I SEND THEM OUT AND THEY COME BACK A BODY SHORT, ONE OF ***THEM*** WILL BE TAKING THE LEAP OF FAITH INSTEAD.

THIS ONE?

LEFTIE PLAYWRIGHT AND ANTI-BOOTH AGITATOR. KNOWN MEMBER OF SEVERAL CYRILLO-CIT FRIENDLY ORGANISATIONS.

HMMM. PROBABLY *NOT* THE HIGHLY PROFICIENT VIGILANTE WHO'S SO FAR KILLED THIRTY-SEVEN ARMED MEN, THEN.

ANOTHER ONE OF YOU WILL BE TAKING THE LEAP OF FAITH IN A MOMENT. PLEASE USE THIS TIME TO UNBURDEN YOUR CONSCIENCES ABOUT ANYTHING YOU MIGHT KNOW ABOUT THIS *'JUDGE DREDD'* CRIMINAL.

WHOOO... QUITE A DROP, ISN'T IT?

CAL? IT'S SLOCUM. HE'S AT YOUR GIRL GALEN'S PLACE...

'...HE SAYS THEY CAUGHT HER TRYING TO TAKE A POWDER AGAIN. WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO DO?'

CAL? I'M SORRY, HONEY! IT WAS A ***MISTAKE!*** I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS DOING--!

IT'S OKAY, GALEN. I'M NOT MAD AT YOU. I KNOW HOW YOU JUST GET CONFUSED SOMETIMES. I'LL BE HOME LATER, AND WE'LL TALK ABOUT IT TOGETHER THEN.

LOVE YOU, SWEETHEART. SEE YOU SOON

TELL SLOCUM TO KEEP ON EYE ON HER UNTIL I GET BACK.

AND BOOK HER AN APPOINTMENT WITH THAT DOCTOR. THE ONE WHO'S GOOD WITH *BRUISES*...

THE MAYOR'S CHARITY BALL IS COMING UP, AND I'LL NEED HER LOOK'NG PRESENTABLE FOR IT.

NOW WHO'S NEXT?

YOU READY FOR THIS?

NOPE

YEAH ME NEITHER.

I MEAN, EVEN GROWING UP IN THE SHANTIES, HE WAS LIKE SOME KIND OF *LEGEND*. SOMEONE YOU READ ABOUT IN BOOKS BUT NEVER THINK YOU'D EVER MEET.

WHAT WAS THAT LINE OF HIS, ABOUT WHY HE WANTED TO CREATE MEGATROPOLIS?

'A BEACON OF LIGHT, FORGED IN OUR GREATEST TECHNOLOGY, FOR THE BETTERMENT OF ALL.'

YEAH, THAT WAS IT.

DIDN'T QUITE WORK OUT THAT WAY, DID IT?

DETECTIVE RICO AND OFFICER JARA, HERE TO INTERVIEW EUSTACE FARGO.

CERTAINLY, OFFICERS. THIS WAY, PLEASE

HOW'S THE ARM, BY THE WAY?

A LITTLE STIFF, BUT IT'LL EASE UP.

I HEAL FAST. FOUND THAT OUT IN THE WAR. GOOD GENES, I GUESS.

GOOD AFTERNOON, OFFICERS. I'M ***WALTER.*** PROFESSOR FARGO IS WAITING FOR YOU.

FOLLOW ME, PLEASE.

PROFESSOR FARGO? WE'RE--

TWO PUSHY YOUNG POLICE OFFICERS, VERY MUCH HERE WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR SUPERIORS, TO DISTURB THE RETIREMENT OF MEGATROPOLIS'S MOST DISTINGUISHED RECLUSE?

THANK YOU, WALTER. YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR DUTIES. MARIA WILL SEE TO MYSELF AND OUR GUESTS.

THEY HAVE *NAMES?*

MARIA AND WALTER ARE THE ONLY REMAINING PROTOTYPES OF WHAT I HAD HOPED WOULD BE MANY MORE OF THEIR KIND...

.. AN ARMY OF LOYAL AND OBEDIENT *MACHINE WORKERS,* RELIEVING US OF THE BURDEN OF MENIAL LABOUR, GIVING OUR CITY'S POPULATION THE OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE THEMSELVES BEYOND WHAT THEY WOULD OTHERWISE BE.

TEA, SIR? MISS?

NOW, THOUGH...

WELL, JUST ANOTHER THING THAT FELL VICTIM TO THE GROWING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OWEN AND MYSELF.

STILL, YOU DIDN'T COME HERE TO HEAR AN OLD MAN RELIVE GRUDGES AGAINST HIS FORMER *BUSINESS PARTNER...*

STEAM TUNNELS. ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU WANT TO HEAR ABOUT?

'MY APOLOGIES, OFFICERS....

'I KNEW YOU WERE COMING, BUT THE MATERIAL YOU REQUESTED IS PROVING RATHER DIFFICULT TO LOCATE...

'...I'M SURE WALTER WILL BE BACK WITH IT SHORTLY.'

DEEET

ANOTHER TUNNEL BEACON TRIGGERED. HE'S HEADING STRAIGHT FOR US.

THEN WE WERE RIGHT ABOUT HIM BEING PLUGGED INTO OUR COMMUNICATIONS, AND NOW HE'S TAKEN THE BAIT.

GET READY, EVERYONE. AUTOMATIC PROMOTION TO SERGEANT OR HIGHER FOR THE MAN WHO EIGHTY-SIXES HIM.

A FAMILY MEMBER, SIR? I SEE A RESEMBLANCE

MY SON, EDWARD. ONE OF OUR CITY'S MANY YOUNG MEN WHO FOUGHT IN THE WAR..

...AND ONE OF THE ONES WHO NEVER RETURNED.

I'M SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS, SIR. AND FOR ASKING ABOUT HIM

NO APOLOGIES NECESSARY. MEGATROPOLIS LOST TOO MANY OF ITS SONS AND DAUGHTERS BACK THEN. WHY SHOULD MY FAMILY BE EXEMPT?

YOU SERVED? YOU HAVE THE LOOK ABOUT YOU.

I DID. ONE OF THE LUCKY ONES, THOUGH. I CAME BACK.

YOUR PARENTS MUST BE PROUD OF YOUR SERVICE.

ORPHAN, SIR. RAISED BY THE CITY.

IN ONE OF THE ACADEMIES *YOUR* CHARITABLE FOUNDATION PAID FOR. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN GRATEFUL FOR THAT.

A *FARGO FOUNDLING!* WASN'T THAT THE POPULAR TERM, BACK IN THE DAY?

AND NOW HERE YOU ARE, GIVING SOMETHING BACK TO OUR CITY. IT'S REASSURING TO KNOW THAT AT LEAST SOME OF YOUR GENERATION STILL THINK AS MINE ONCE DID...

'... THAT IT'S IMPORTANT TO STILL BELIEVE IN SERVING A GREATER GOOD.

'WHAT ABOUT YOU, OFFICER JARA? I SEEM TO REMEMBER A NOTORIOUS POLITICAL AGITATOR BY THAT NAME.'

'AMERICA JARA. MY MOTHER, SIR.

'SHE DIED WHEN I WAS A CHILD.

'ACTUALLY, NO...

NITRO ROUND

'.. SHE WAS **MURDERED.** FOR ORGANISING STRIKES AGAINST THE POWER CORPORATIONS.'

'I REMEMBER NOW. WEREN'T THERE SUSPICIONS THAT HER KILLERS MIGHT HAVE BEEN CORRUPT MEMBERS OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT?'

'THAT WAS THE RUMOUR, SIR...

YOU!

'.. ALTHOUGH MY MOTHER'S MURDERER STILL REMAINS UNIDENTIFIED.'

THIS IS WHERE IT ENDS FOR YOU! I'VE SEEN MY ***DESTINY,*** AND YOU'RE NOT PART OF IT!

CAL--!

BOSS, YOU'RE HIT! WE GOTTA GET YOU OUTTA HERE!

FIND HIM, OR YOU'LL ALL BE WATCHING YOUR BACKS FOR ANGEL GANGERS IN THE SHANTIES BY ROLL CALL TOMORROW!

'MY APOLOGIES, OFFICER JARA...

' ..PLEASE FORGIVE ME FOR CALLING UP WHAT MUST BE **PAINFUL** MEMORIES FOR YOU '

NOT AT ALL, SIR. THE CASE STILL REMAINS OPEN. I INTEND TO SUCCESSFULLY CLOSE IT ONE DAY

AN ADMIRABLE AMBITION, MY DEAR. I SINCERELY HOPE YOU DO.

AH, YOUR MISSION A SUCCESS, WALTER?

YES, SIR, BUT I'M AFRAID IT'S TIME FOR YOUR DAILY PHYSIOTHERAPY PROGRAMME...

...SO IF YOUR BUSINESS WITH OUR VISITORS IS CONCLUDED?

GET THE FEELING THIS WAS ABOUT A LOT MORE THAN PUTTING SOME OLD BLUEPRINT PLANS INTO OUR HANDS.

YEAH ..

'...FELT LIKE WE WERE BEING INTERVIEWED FOR A JOB NO ONE'S EVEN TOLD US EXISTED.'

YOU WERE RIGHT, HILDA ONE A CRUSADER, THE OTHER AN AVENGER. VERY STRONG POTENTIAL THERE.

EUSTACE, WE NEED TO TALK--

WE NEED TO ***STOP*** THIS. I'M GETTING REPORTS OF SOMETHING HAPPENING IN THE LOWERY DISTRICT. A CALHOUN OP GONE BADLY WRONG..

HE WAS THERE! THERE'S COPS ***DEAD***, EUSTACE! MAYBE A DOZEN OR MORE!

HE'S OUT OF CONTROL! WE AGREED ON SURGICAL PRECISION, NOT INDISCRIMINATE SLAUGHTER!

YOU'RE RIGHT, HILDA. I'LL TALK TO HIM, GET HIM TO SEE SENSE

WE'LL RE-ASSESS THE SITUATION, AND SCALE THINGS DOWN, IF NECESSARY.

BUT WE CAN'T STOP NOW. NOT THIS CLOSE TO ACCOMPLISHING OUR AIMS.

I'M DISAPPOINTED IN HILDA, WALTER. I THOUGHT SHE WOULD HAVE MORE STOMACH FOR THIS.

YES, SIR.

NOW, LET US SEE...

OH, MY CHILD, WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO YOU?

JARA? IT'S RICO. YOU SIGNED OUT AN H-CAR FOR A TRIP INTO THE SPOILS?

FOLLOWING UP A HUNCH ON SOMETHING FARGO SAID.

HIS SUPPOSEDLY DEAD SON?

FOUND OUT HE WAS BEING TREATED IN A PLACE CALLED THE *JUDD INSTITUTE.* FANCY PRIVATE CLINIC OUTSIDE THE CITY.

I'M ON MY WAY THERE NOW.

GOOD LEAD. I'M CHASING UP SOMETHING OF MY OWN.

IF I TOLD YOU WHAT IT WAS, THOUGH, YOU PROBABLY WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME.

THIS WAY, SIR...

'...MADAM CASSANDRA IS EXPECTING YOU.'

THANK YOU FOR COMING, LIEUTENANT RICO.

IT'S JUST *DETECTIVE,* MA'AM.

TRUST ME, IT'LL BE LIEUTENANT SOON ENOUGH.

I CAN SEE THE FUTURE, REMEMBER.

YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, OF COURSE.

I'M A POLICEMAN. WE'RE ONLY EXPERTS ON SOMEONE'S *PAST*, NOT THEIR FUTURE.

SUCH AS..?

PLAIN CASSIE ANDERSON, BORN--WELL, DATES VARY--IN SOME DUSTBOWL TOWN IN THE SPOILS. ARRESTS FOR VAGRANCY, SOLICITING AND GRIFTING. THEN SHE DISAPPEARS FROM THE RECORDS...

...AND A COUPLE OF YEARS LATER MADAM CASSANDRA MAKES HER HIGH SOCIETY DEBUT.

I CAN'T DENY MEGATROPOLIS HAS BEEN GOOD TO ME, BUT NOTHING LASTS FOREVER.

YOU'RE LEAVING TOWN?

LIKE I SAID, I CAN SEE THE FUTURE...

THERE'S A *DARKNESS* COMING, AND I DON'T WANT TO BE HERE WHEN IT ARRIVES. THIS *VIGILANTE* IS JUST THE START OF IT.

YOU THINK I'M BEING OVER-FANCIFUL? THEN CALL IT A *WAR*...

... BETWEEN THE CITY'S TWO FOUNDING FATHERS, EVERYONE'S GOING TO HAVE TO CHOOSE A SIDE

INCLUDING YOU *ESPECIALLY* YOU.

AND NOW YOU'RE GOING TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT HOW YOU COULD JUST HAVE GONE TO A SHANTYTOWN GYPSY IF YOU WANTED SOME HOKEY FORTUNE-TELLING ROUTINE.

YOU READ MINDS TOO? GOOD TO KNOW.

I WANTED TO MEET YOU FACE TO FACE...AND TO GIVE YOU *THIS*--

I'M LEAVING TONIGHT SO I WON'T BE NEEDING THEM NOW.

I RECOMMEND YOU ATTEND, LIEUTENANT. A LOT MIGHT DEPEND ON IT.

*'TOLD YOU ALREADY, MA'AM. IT'S JUST **DETECTIVE.**'*

'AND I KEEP ON TELLING YOU I CAN SEE THE FUTURE.

'WE'LL MEET AGAIN, LIEUTENANT RICO, BUT UNDER VERY DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES...

'...YOU, ME AND YOUR FIERCE YOUNG PARTNER.'

SO HOW WAS YOUR DAY?

PERPLEXING. YOURS?

LINE UP ANOTHER HALF DOZEN OF THESE, AND I'LL TELL YOU.

'SO I WENT TO THIS CLINIC, AND TALKED IN PERSON WITH THIS JUDD GUY...

...YOU'RE RIGHT, OFFICER JARA. CAPTAIN JOSEPH FARGO DIDN'T DIE IN THE WAR, AS WAS COMMONLY BELIEVED...

HIS INJURIES WERE *GRIEVOUS*, BUT HE SURVIVED AND WAS KEPT HERE NATURALLY, WE RESPECTED HIS FATHER'S WISHES THAT HIS SON'S CONDITION BE KEPT PRIVATE.

ALAS, THE CAPTAIN NEVER RESPONDED TO TREATMENT AND FINALLY SUCCUMBED TO HIS WOUNDS SEVERAL YEARS AGO, WITHOUT HIM EVER REGAINING CONSCIOUSNESS.

A FINE YOUNG MAN. HE REALLY COULD HAVE MADE SUCH A CONTRIBUTION TO--

EXCUSE ME. AN URGENT MEDICAL MATTER THAT REQUIRES MY ATTENTION.

PLEASE WAIT HERE I SHALL RETURN MOMENTARILY WITH THE PAPERWORK ON CAPTAIN FARGO'S PASSING.

'I'M PRETTY SURE NOW IT WAS ALL A SET-UP...

'THEY **WANTED** ME TO BE THERE

...TO SEE WHAT THEY COULD DO, AND HOW LITTLE IT MATTERED IF I KNEW ABOUT IT.

'IT WAS HIM. PHILIP MAYBRY...

'I KILLED THAT LITTLE PSYCHO, BUT SEEMS MAYBRY MONEY CAN BRING PEOPLE BACK FROM THE DEAD.'

ANYWAY, FOUND THE FARGO FOLDER LEFT AT THE CAR. IT CHECKS OUT...

.. SO GUESS WE'RE BACK TO SQUARE ONE ON VIGILANTE SUSPECTS.

AND ALL IT PROBABLY COST ME WAS WAKING UP SCREAMING FROM NIGHTMARES FOR THE NEXT COUPLA YEARS

OH WELL, HERE'S TO LIFE IN THE BIG--

MAYBE YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH FOR TONIGHT, JARA. BIG NIGHT TOMORROW...

'.. WE'VE GOT A PARTY TO ATTEND.'

MAYOR BOOTH'S PARTY ABOVE THE CLOUDS CHARITY BALL!

EVERYONE WHO'S ANYONE IS HERE TONIGHT, AND NOT EVEN THE RECENT VIGILANTE KILLINGS IS GOING TO STOP THE GREAT AND THE GOOD OF MEGATROPOLIS FROM TURNING OUT FOR WHAT'S THE BIGGEST EVENT IN THE SOCIAL CALENDAR!

..ALL YOUR MOST CROOKED PALS AND CORRUPT CAMPAIGN DONORS TOGETHER ABOARD A FLOATING DEATH-TRAP?

WHAT ARE YOU, BOB? THE DREDD VIGILANTE'S SECRET ACCOMPLICE?

HILDA, YOU SANCTIMONIOUS OLD HAG! DELIGHTED YOU COULD MAKE IT!

ENJOY THE PARTY IT'LL BE ONE OF YOUR LAST CHANCES TO CATCH UP WITH ALL THE PEOPLE WHO'LL DROP YOU LIKE A STONE AFTER YOU LOSE THE ELECTION.

AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT SECURITY--

CAPTAIN CALHOUN HERE ASSURES ME THE KILLER IS EITHER DEAD OR SERIOUSLY INJURED.

AMBASSADOR KAZAN! WONDERFUL TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

WE BELIEVE HIM?

ROFFMAN'S MONITORING THEIR RADIOS. IF ANYTHING'S HAPPENING, WE'LL KNOW.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY McGRUDER? MY NAME IS ***GRUNWALDER,*** REPRESENTING OWEN KRYSLER'S INTERESTS...

...WHO, BY THE WAY, WISHES TO CONVEY HIS HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR DECISION TO RUN IN THE MAYORAL ELECTION.

YOU'RE REALLY ***HIM,*** AREN'T YOU? ***OWEN KRYSLER.*** FARGO WARNED ME ABOUT SOME OF THE ***MAGIC TRICKS*** YOU COULD PULL.

AAH, SO ASTUTE. WHAT A FINE MAYOR YOU COULD MAKE...

AND HOW IS DEAR OLD EUSTACE? STILL MOPING AFTER DEAD CHILDREN AND TINKERING WITH ALL THOSE CLEVER LITTLE TOYS?

WHAT DO YOU WANT, KRYSLER? BOOTH'S *YOUR CREATURE* AS MUCH AS THIS TH'NG I'M TALKING TO.

POOR BOB. PUPPETS HAVE THEIR USES, BUT HE'S STARTING TO LOOK A LITTLE FRAYED AROUND THE EDGES.

THIS VIGILANTE BUSINESS, FOR EXAMPLE...

SPEAKING OF WHICH, IT'S TIME FOR ME TO GO. I'D HATE TO GET ANY BULLET HOLES IN THIS BODY.

PLEASE STAY SAFE, MS McGRUDER. YOU HAVE AN ELECTION TO FIGHT

NICE TUX. WHO'D YOU BORROW IT FROM? CONRAD CONN?

I HAVE FOUR SUITS. THIS IS THE ONE WITH THE FEWEST SOUP STAINS.

GUTHRIE.

YOU'RE HERE TOO? GOOD..

WE HAVE TO GET THE D.A. OUT OF HERE. SOMETHING BAD'S ABOUT TO GO DOWN!

TALK TO ME, RATMAN.

SENTRY H-CARS HAVE SPOTTED SOMETHING, BUT IT'S COMING IN TOO FAST FOR THE SNIPERS TO GET A BEAD ON IT...

THIS IS IT! HE'S MAKING HIS BIG MOVE!

THE MAYORAL PARTY ABOVE THE CLOUDS CHARITY BALL--

MAYOR ROBERT BOOTH-- JUDGEMENT HAS COME FOR YOU!

YOU..

.. AND OTHERS HERE

VICTOR AND MAURICE MUNGO--LOAN-SHARKS FEEDING OFF THE POVERTY OF TENS OF THOUSANDS.

GUILTY.

ALPHONSE JONG--MAKING MILLIONS PEDDLING STIMS TO STEAM-DISTRICT WORKERS JUST SO THEY COULD MAKE THEIR PRODUCTION QUOTAS.

GUILTY.

STEAM-DISTRICT INDUSTRIALIST FENNINGTON WILLOW, WHO MADE BILLIONS SETTING THOSE PRODUCTION ROTAS THAT WORK HIS EMPLOYEES TO DEATH.

GUILTY

BOOTH CAMPAIGN DONOR MILLICENT TOWNSEND, WHOSE PETRO-CHEMICAL COMPANY'S FLUSHING OF TOXIC EFFLUENT INTO THE SHANTYTOWNS GOES UNPUNISHED.

GUILTY.

SLUM LANDLORD IVAN TREMAINE, WHO PAYS OFF CITY OFFICIALS TO TURN A BLIND EYE TO THE CONDITIONS HIS TENANTS ARE FORCED TO LIVE IN.

GUILTY.

MOBSTER CARLO SCHUTZ, WHO DEALS WITH ANY TREMAINE TENANTS WHO COMPLAIN TOO MUCH.

GUILTY.

HE'S GONE CRAZY! GUTHRIE-- PROTECT THE D.A!

HE'S GONNA KILL US ALL! PROTECT ME!

OFFICER JARA--WITH ME!

SINFIELD, GET THE MAYOR OUT OF HERE!

WE REALLY DOING THIS?

LOOKS LIKE IT.

SINFIELD.. ?

SINFIELD, YOU LITTLE WEASEL!

GAS ROUNDS! LOOK OUT!

KOFF KOFF! WHERE IS HE ..?

UNGGN!

JARA!

I-I'LL BE OKAY .. YOUR TURN TO GO AFTER HIM!

CAL? WHAT ABOUT THE MAYOR? SHOULDN'T YOU BE DOING SOMETHING?

YOU'RE TELLING ME MY JOB NOW, GALEN?

WE'LL TALK MORE ABOUT THIS WHEN WE GET HOME, SHALL WE?

UNTIL THEN, WE STAY HERE AND YOU KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT...

'...IF RICO WANTS TO BE A DEAD HERO, THEN THAT'S UP TO HIM.'

MEGATROPOLIS P.D.! STOP!

I SAID STOP, LAWBREAKER!

NO--!

ARMOUR-PIERCING SLUGS. I CAME PREPARED THIS TIME.

HE'S NOT ONE OF *THEM*. I FORBID YOU TO KILL HIM.

A *MACHINE!* IT'S A GODDAMN MACHINE--!

THIS MAN'S A CRIMINAL. WHY DO YOU WANT TO PROTECT HIM?

BECAUSE IT'S THE LAW.

IF YOUR LAW PROTECTS THIS MAN, THEN IT'S *CORRUPT.*

PEOPLE ARE CORRUPT, BUT THE LAW MUST BE PURE

NO ONE SHOOT! IT'S GOT THE MAYOR!

IF HE'S GUILTY, THEN THE LAW WILL CATCH UP WITH HIM. I SWEAR I'LL DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN.

BUT WE CAN'T BE JUDGE, JURY AND EXECUTIONER. IT CAN NEVER WORK LIKE THAT.

TAKE THE LAW INTO YOUR OWN HANDS AND YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER CRIMINAL.

I AM NOT THE LAW? I AM A CRIMINAL?

THEN I SHOULD BE JUDGED.

IT'S RELEASED THE MAYOR! OPEN FIRE!

HELLUVA JOB, OFFICER, BAMBOOZLING IT WITH ALL THAT BALONEY ABOUT GUILT AND THE LAW.

I OWE YOU. AND BOB BOOTH ALWAYS REMEMBERS HIS FRIENDS. WHAT'S YOUR NAME, SON?

RICO, SIR..

'...DETECTIVE JOE RICO.'

TO *LIEUTENANT* JOE RICO, NEWLY ANOINTED SAVIOUR OF OUR BELOVED MAYOR.

SURE YOU'RE NOT TOO GOOD TO DRINK HERE ANYMORE, LAD?

BAR

SEARCH CONTINUES FOR A BODY BUT ACTING DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CALHOUN HAS DECLARED THE KILLING SPREE OF THE SO-CALLED 'JUDGE DREDD CRIMINAL TO BE OVER

CALHOUN. I HEARD HE SPENT THE BATTLE HIDING UNDER A TABLE WITH HIS GIRLFRIEND!

DESPITE HIS PROMOTION, HE'LL NOT BE BOOTH'S GOLDEN BOY NOW.

SO WHAT'S OUR NEW LIEUTENANT'S FIRST ACT GOING TO BE?

HE'S ALREADY DONE IT.

DETECTIVE JARA, FIRST MEMBER OF THE NEW DEPARTMENTAL TASK FORCE...

TASK FORCE?

TO CLEAN UP THIS CITY, ONE CROOKED COP AND POLITICIAN AT A TIME..

.. EVEN IF HIS HONOUR DOESN'T REALISE THAT'S WHAT HE'S JUST SIGNED OFF ON.

DRINK UP, DETECTIVE. WE'VE GOT A LOT OF WORK TO DO.

HE THINKS ABOUT MADAM CASSANDRA AND HER PREDICTION ABOUT H'M MAKING LIEUTENANT HE WONDERS WHAT ELSE SHE MIGHT BE RIGHT ABOUT...

ABOUT A *COMING DARKNESS...*

AND A *WAR...*

...BETWEEN THE CITY'S TWO FOUNDERS

YOU'RE TRYING AGAIN, SIR? IS THAT WISE?

NOT AGAIN. *ANEW.*

I MADE MISTAKES. I MISSED SOMETHING OUT.

A CONSCIENCE.

EPILOGUE:

CLAY? ONE OF THE SCAVS FOUND SOMETHING THOUGHT YOU WOULD WANNA SEE IT.

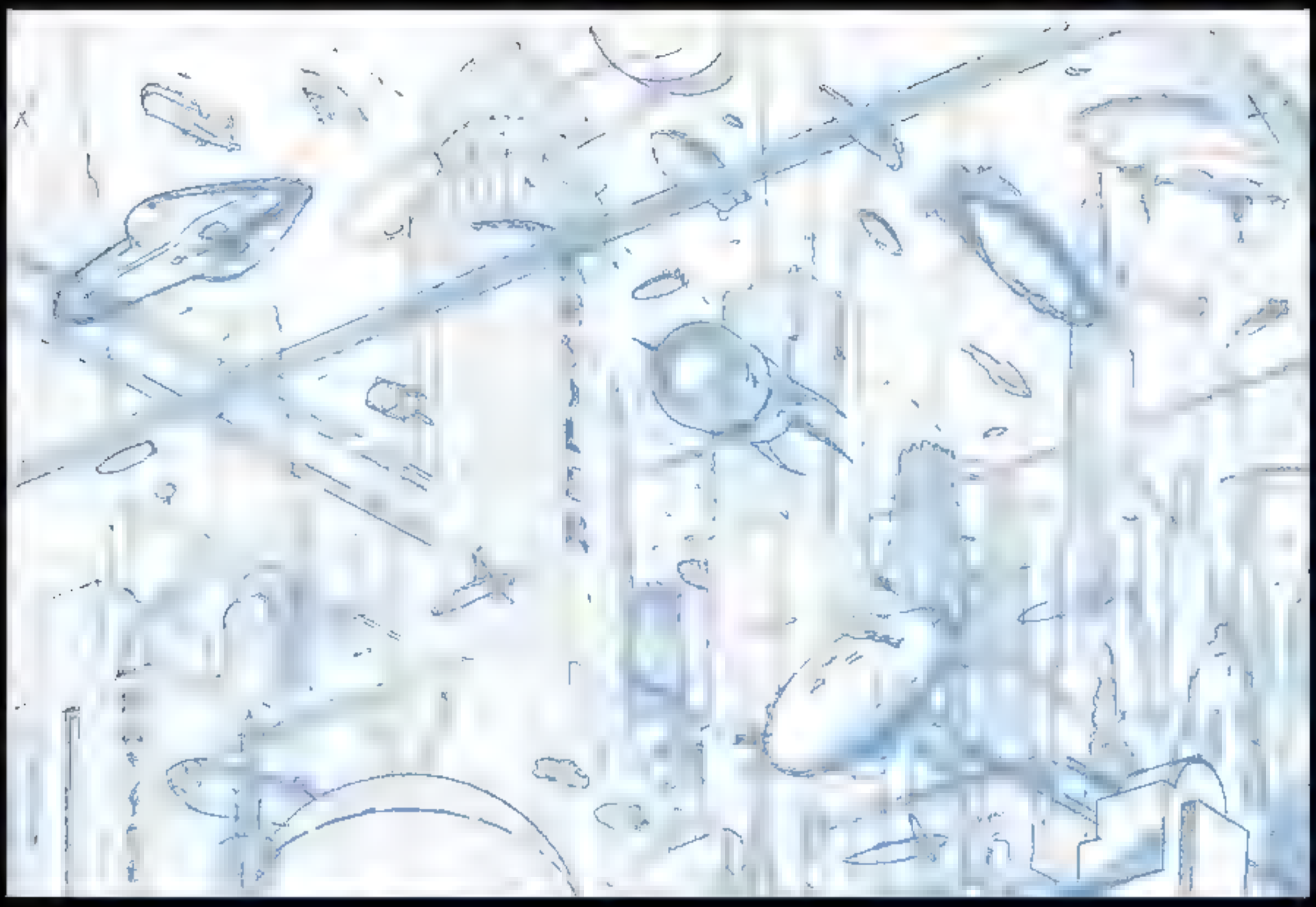
YEAH? WHAT IS IT?

Gallery

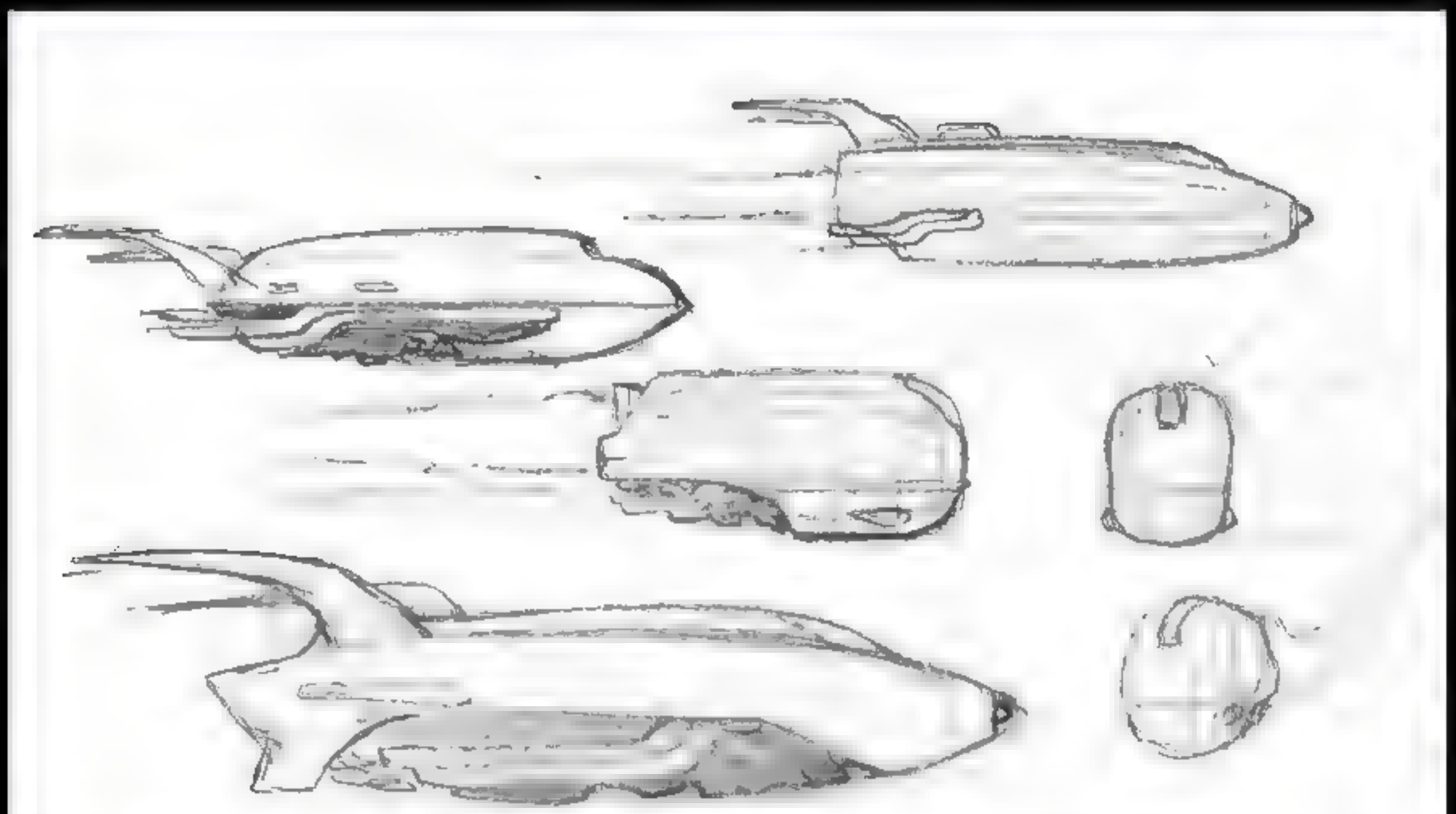
Notes by Dave Taylor

Judge Dredd Megazine 431; Cover by Dave Taylor

Design

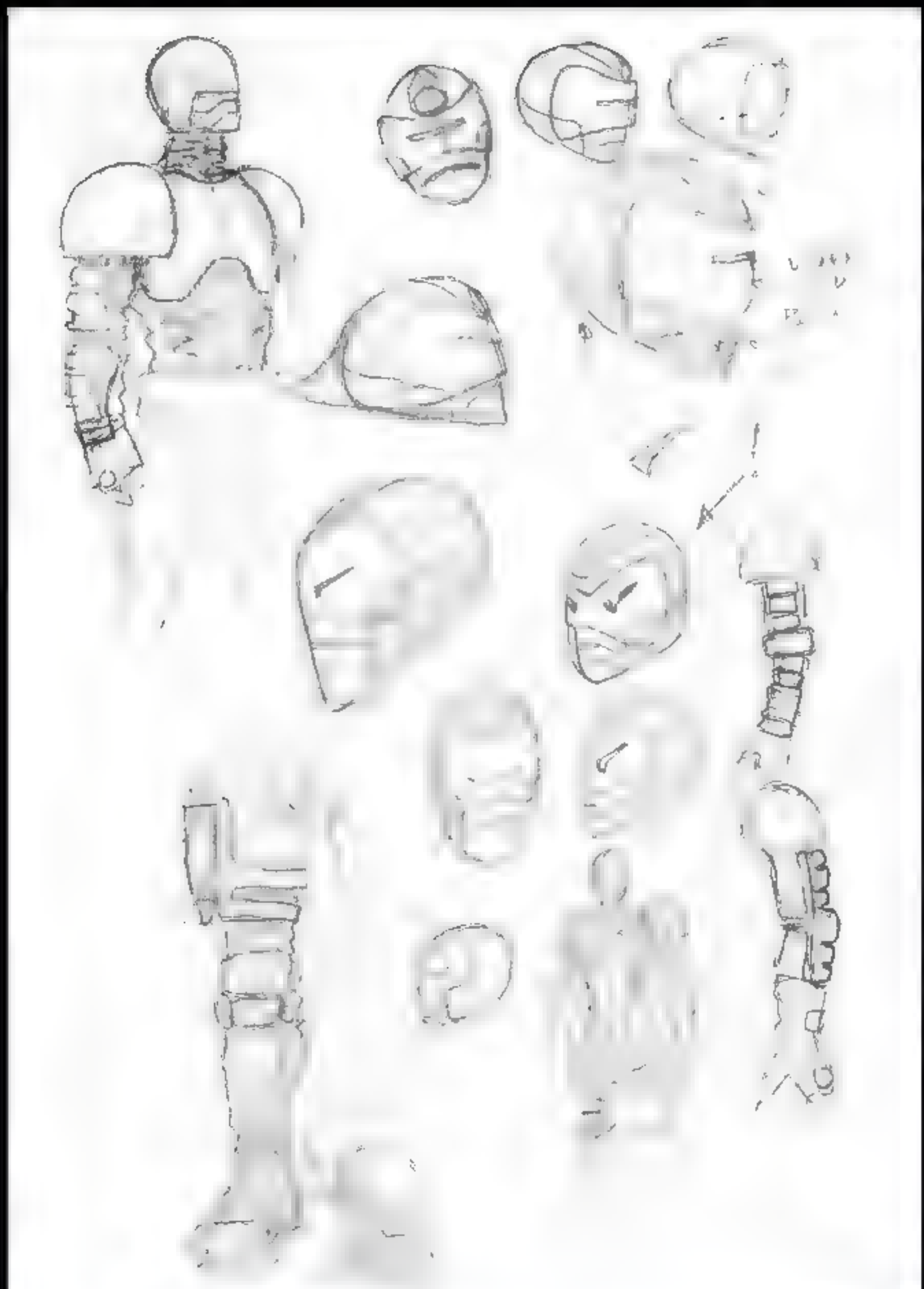


As I settled in to read the script for the first time I remember thinking "This is going to be good. Something big and challenging". I quickly realized why I'd been offered this gig, because of my **Batman: Death by Design** book (with Chip Kidd), which was very architecturally based and was set in a kind of similar environment and time period. But this time I got to use my imagination, although contained within a pretty strict and established framework: I could have fun learning about the design of this new world.

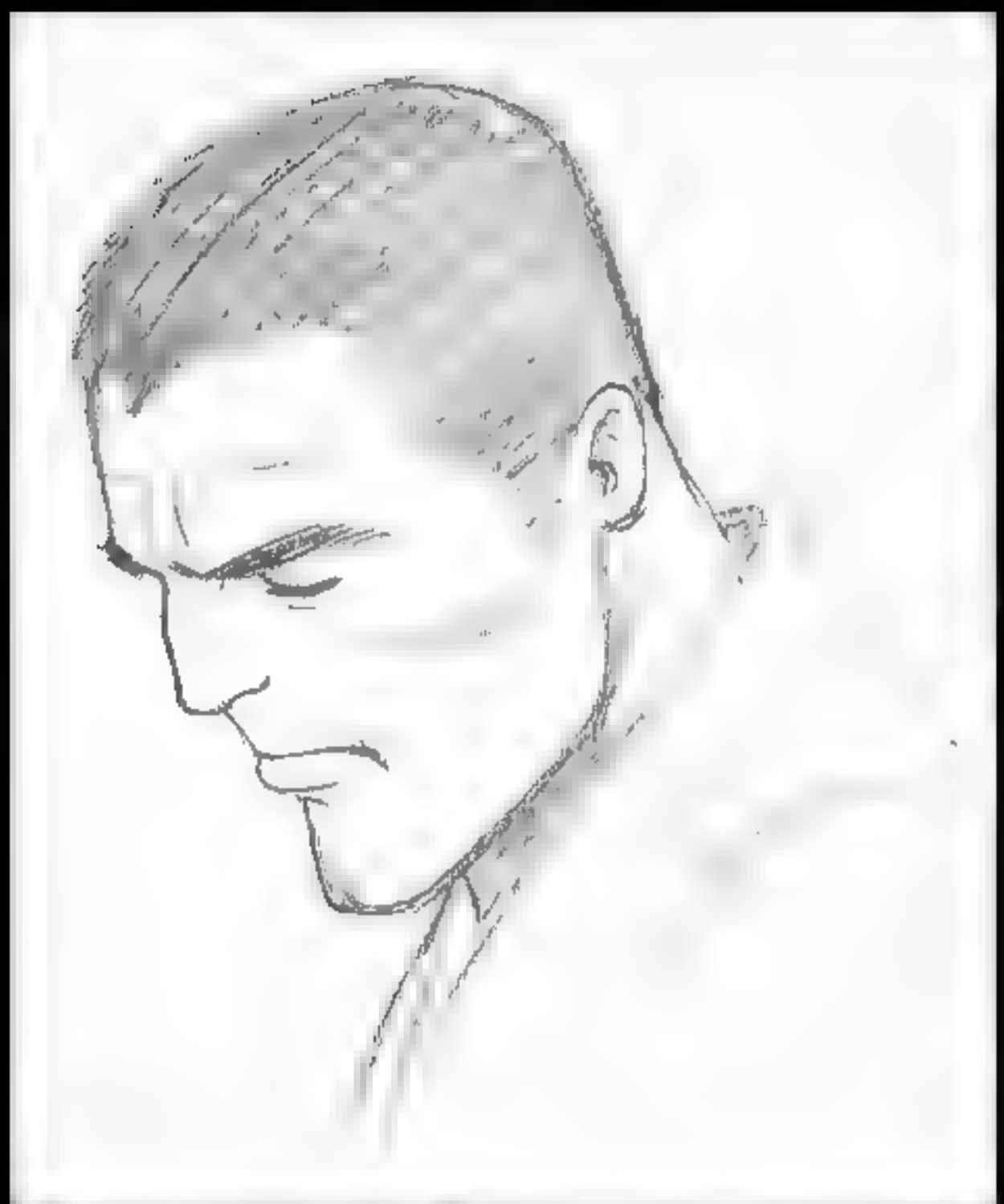


Megatropolis had to feel familiar yet unique and new. I buried myself in research, reminding myself of the essential elements of Art Deco and applying that to designing the city and it's details. I kept in mind what Fritz Lang had created for the movie **Metropolis**, which was cited in Kenneth's script as a major influence for the overall look of the project. I tried to get into the heads of those set designers in the late 20's, while remaining a true fan of the Dredd universe and how Mega-City One should look.

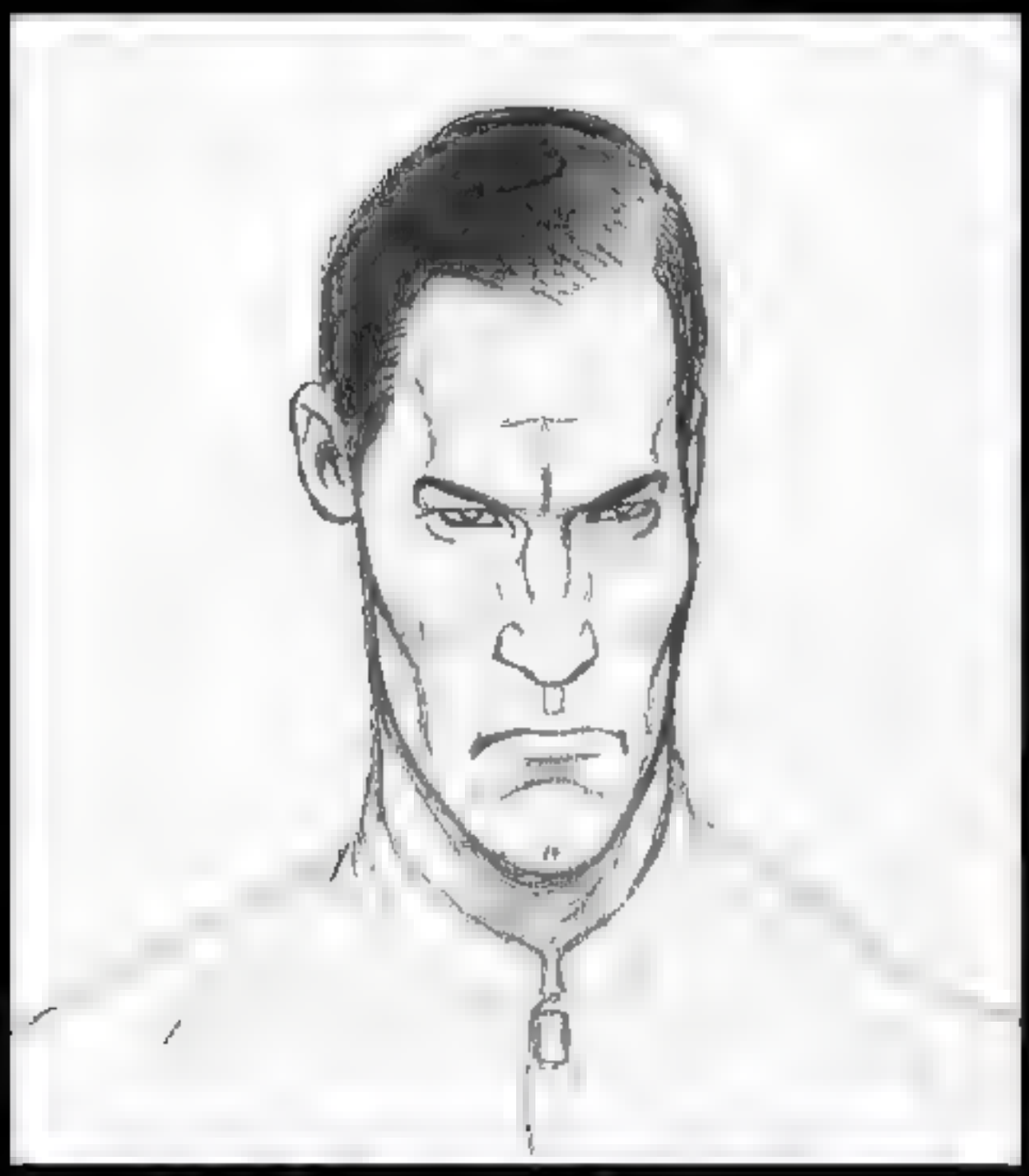
It was important to me that the city should feel like the city the readers/fans are familiar with while being in a different universe. Not sure I managed that but it was certainly my intention.



Designing the Megatropolis Dredd, while being an honour and a privilege, kept me up at night. If I didn't give a damn about the character or his long history it would have been far easier! Like the city, this Dredd had to be somehow familiar while fitting into his world. It had to be visually obvious that this was Dredd while clearly not being the Dredd we all know. I probably overthought all of this because when it came to actually putting pencil to paper he quite quickly formed naturally in front of me. Being a total fan boy helped enormously, I'm sure.

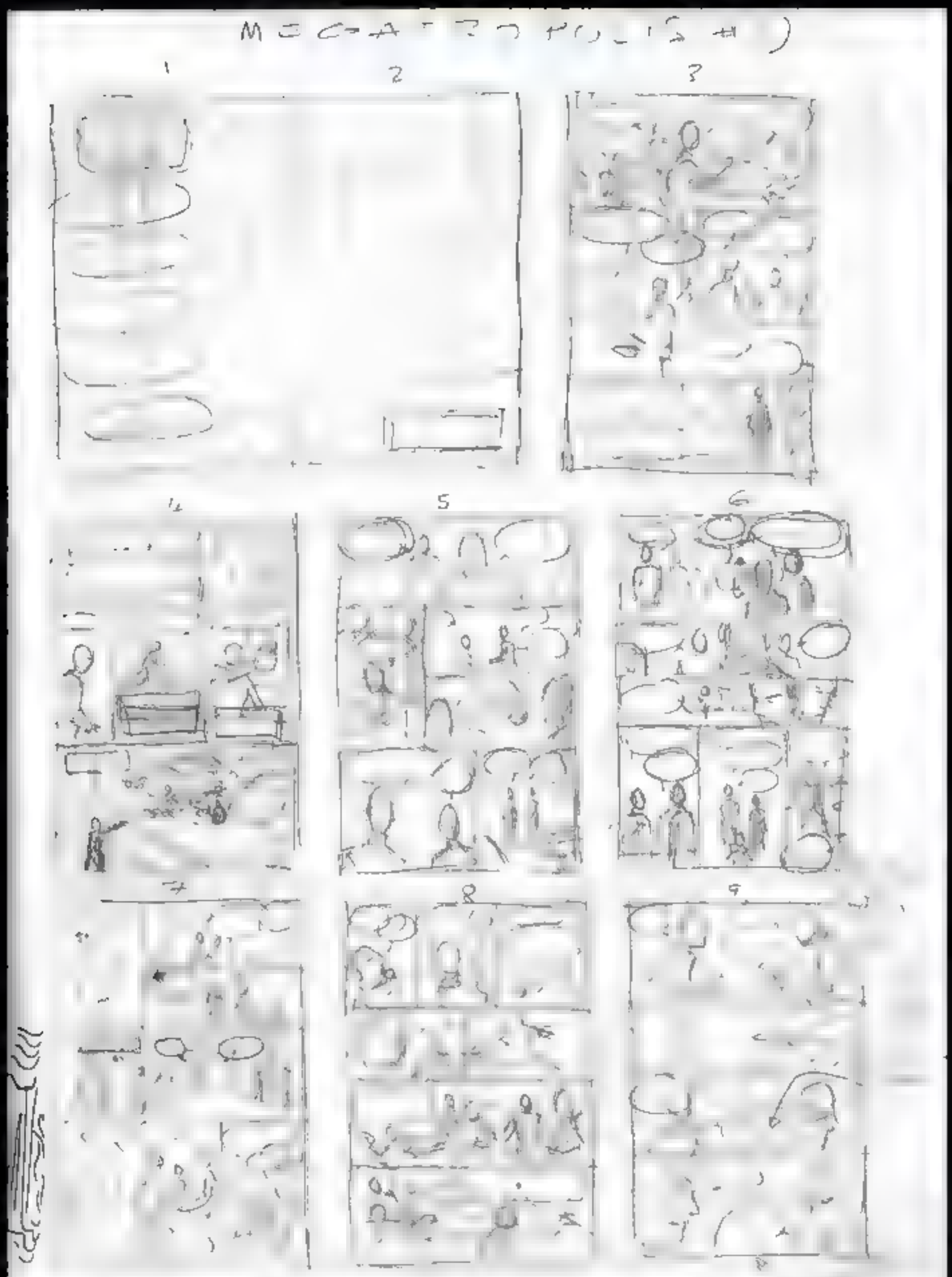


So, what do you do when someone gives you a job in which you're forced to reveal something that "must not be revealed"?! History shows us that these folks are generally ostracised at best, crucified at worst! Yeah, I know... this isn't Joe Dredd but it might as well be from my point of view. Yes, it's an Elseworlds thing but it's still Joe Rico, our link to the Dredd we all know. I admit that while reading the script for the first time a thought crossed my mind that went something like "I don't wanna be that guy! I'm gonna be the guy that breaks the unbreakable rule!" My inner fan boy had some issues with this, but I know that if I keep clear of comic conventions for the rest of my life and pretty much stay indoors I should be safe.

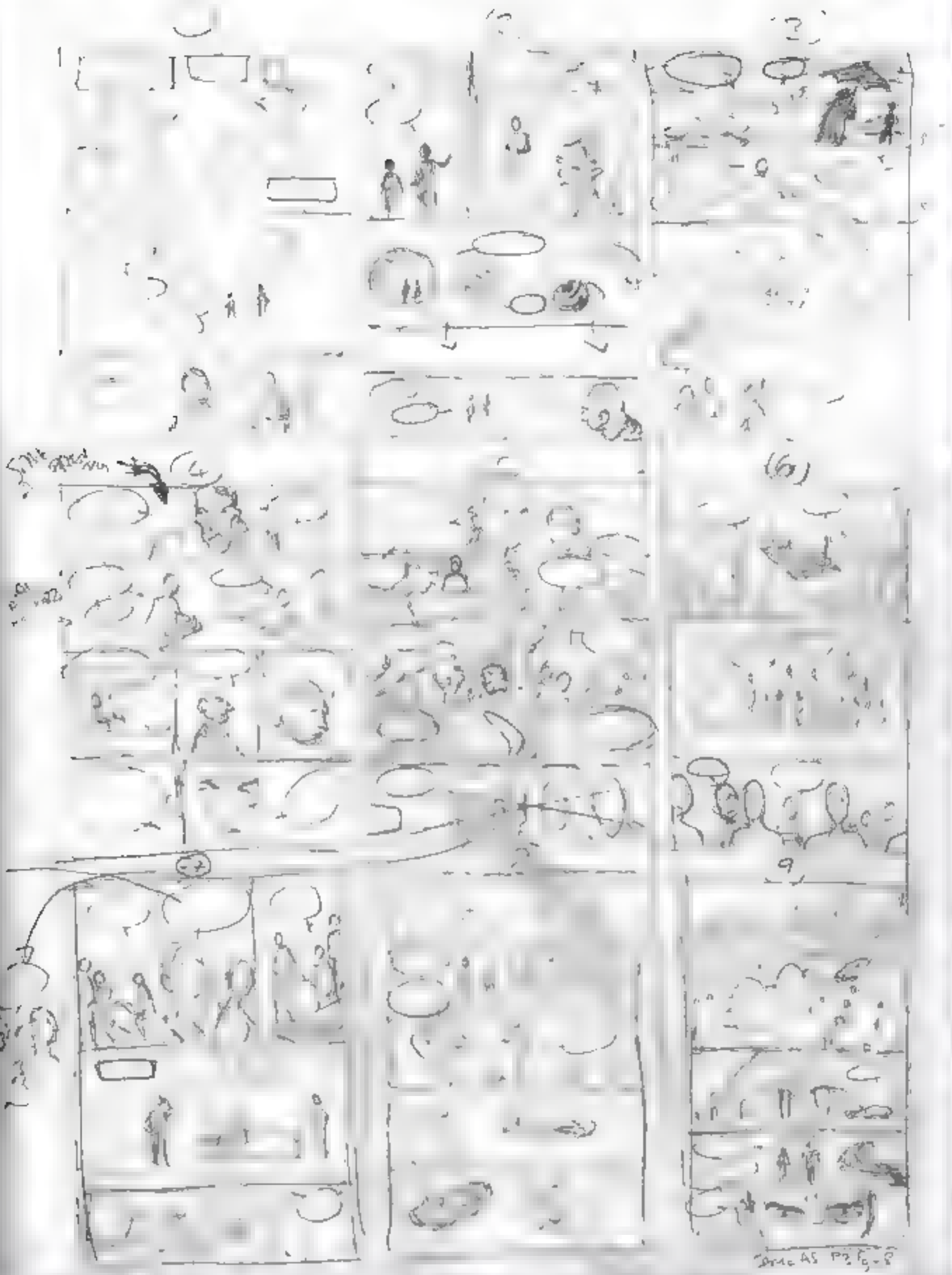


I needed Joe to be funny lookin'. I thought it would be too boring if he just looked like a regular guy, that just didn't sit right with me. We all knew what the lower part of his face looked like, and I didn't want to play around with that sacred ground, but his eyes were the issue here. They had to be convincing as Dredd's eyes while being "the windows of the soul" for Joe Rico. Lucky for me one of my first attempts actually worked and I pretty much stuck to this sketch (*see on left*). It had something odd about it I liked and that was enough for me. I have since moved to a remote island.

Process



I start off by quickly sketching out each page in a small sketchbook, each page layout being around 3x2 inches.



Then I draw each page with a blue pencil, to capture the placements and overall design of the page, then I use a regular graphite pencil to "ink" the page. I feel I'd lose the grittiness of the pencil if I took the traditional inking approach, especially on this book. After scanning the page I then go ahead and colour it using Photoshop, which is a device created by magic fairies, presumably.

My process for this book was a little new for me. I like to experiment constantly and I saw this gig as a good excuse to play around with texture and dark lighting. I wanted to find a happy medium between the printed page and digital reproduction, to see how far I could push the lighting to create as much mood as possible, to capture the feel of what the script is asking for.

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Visualising *Megatropolis*, the book, has been both a rewarding challenge as an artist and a genuine thrill as a fan boy. Something like this doesn't come along every day. These "special projects" are just that...special. To me at least.

KENNETH NIEMAND

A Forces brat, **Kenneth Niemand**'s first exposure to the world of Judge Dredd was through random copies of **2000 AD** circulating in various RAF bases around the world. He now writes radio comedy, video games and, increasingly, bits and pieces of the world of *Judge Dredd*.

DAVE TAYLOR

Dave Taylor began drawing comics professionally for Marvel UK after many failed attempts at being a rock star drummer. He was head hunted by DC to work on a **Batman** one-shot with **Grendel** writer/artist Matt Wagner, going on to work predominantly on **Batman** titles such as **Batman: Shadow of the Bat** (with Alan Grant), **Detective Comics, Batman: Black and White** and others. His collaboration with graphic designer extraordinaire Chip Kidd on **Batman: Death by Design** became a **New York Times** best seller (twice). Taylor's acclaimed adult only series **Tongue Lash** grew from his friendship with French comic Master Jean Moebius Giraud, who Taylor also worked with on an *Arzach* story. He has also produced work for TV, movies and the games industry and is presently employed by the United States Space Force as an extraterrestrial translator.

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